

IN THE CLAIMS:

Cancel claims 1-7.

Add the following new claims:

B18 sub C17 --8. (new) A process for joining the ends of hollow metal section strips or the ends of a hollow metal section strip which has been bent into a frame to one another to produce a spacer for insulating glass, the process comprising the steps of:

producing edges which extend over the width of at least one surface of the ends to be joined to one another and the edges are set back relative to the faces of the end, the at least one surface comprising the surface which will be the inner surface of the spacer inside the insulating glass;

placing the faces of the ends against one another; and

butt welding the ends together while moving the ends towards one another until the edges touch one another.

--9. (new) The process as claimed in claim 8, wherein the set-back edges are produced by forming steps.

--10. (new) The process as claimed in claim 8, wherein the set-back edges are produced by forming grooves.